

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**MINUTES**

**The Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School District School Committee held a meeting on this date at 7:00 p.m. in the Exeter-West Greenwich Jr. – Sr. High School Library. Members present were Susan DeSack, Chairperson; Teri Cicero, Vice Chairperson; Gregory Coutcher, Clerk; Valerie Zuercher; Mark Rafanelli, Robert Bollengier, and Mary Walsh. Superintendent Thomas J. Geismar; and Director of Administration Robert V. Ross were present. Director of Curriculum Nancy I. Daley, Director of Special Services Carmella Farrar and Student Member Katherine Matook were absent.**

**ORDER – Chair DeSack called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all and Vice Chair Cicero read the District Mission Statement.**

**Open Forum (15-minute limit) – None**

**Recognition/Achievements – Sr. High Boys' Basketball Team and Coach Sportsmanship Award – Dr. Geismar expressed how pleased he was when he learned that the Sr. High School Boys' Basketball Team was awarded the Rhode Island Interscholastic League Sportsmanship Award for Division I for this past season. On behalf**

of the School Committee, Chair DeSack offered congratulations to Coach Craig Main and presented him with a School Committee Apple Recognition Award. Chair DeSack then offered congratulations to team member Sean Livsey and presented him with School Committee Recognition Certificates. Coach Main thanked the committee for taking the time to recognize the team. He said that he wished more team members could have attended tonight's meeting. Coach Main expressed his appreciation for the support received from Athletic Director Steven McGrane, Principal Boulé, and Superintendent Geismar. He said that his team is one from a small school in the state that played in the best division in the state. And the sportsmanship award is recognition that the team worked hard and showed a lot of respect.

#### **Presentation – Student Member Report – None**

**Sr. High School Presentation – Principal Boulé said that she will start by introducing some talented students who will give an indication of some of the things they have been doing this school year. Alexandra Niaura and Andrew White reported they took first place in the Rhode Island Public High School Video Contest. As the first place winners, their work – “Drinking-Teens” will be produced by ABC6 television and air on Channel 6 sometime after June 6th, they will each receive a \$500 scholarship, and a dinner will be held on June 6th to preview the finished public service announcement and recognize the achievements of contest winners. Media teacher Ronald Rounds**

spoke briefly about the skills used and the experience Alex and Andrew will gain through this exposure and he praised the quality of their work. Next, Principal Boulé introduced Lilly Bradburn who recited a poem she wrote entitled, "Where the Trees Tend to Grow".

Lilly

EXETER-WEST GREENWICH May 26, 2009

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT Page 2

said that she wrote her poem following her visit to the Nazi concentration camps in Germany. Next, English teacher Brent Robitaille reported that the newly formed Debate Team just completed its first season. Of the 50 trophies awarded to Novice debaters throughout the season, EWG has taken home 11. Claudia and Joanna Heaney earned first place by being the number one Novice team in the state of Rhode Island. Principal Boulé then invited alumna Emma Walsh who now attends the RI School of Design, (RISD) to share her fashion designs. Emma expressed praise for the EWG Art Department programs that helped to prepare her and fellow alumnae for the rigorous programs at RISD. She gave her opinion that the Arts are as important as core subjects. Next, Principal Boulé gave an overview of the various curriculum pathways created that have interchangeable parts. Technology teacher Arthur Searle and Media teacher Ronald Rounds highlighted key points of and demonstrated how Google Tools can be used to support Senior Project going forward. Lastly, Principal Boulé reported that the Commissioner's Review Visit will take place on October 26, 2009. The

**Commissioner's Team will look closely at the senior high's ILP system and aligning GSEs.**

**ROUTINE ITEMS – CONSENT AGENDA- Superintendent Geismar gave an overview of the Consent Agenda.**

**Member Bollengier requested to pull consent agenda item, VI. B 2. a. for discussion.**

**Member Bollengier moved to accept the consent agenda with item, VI. B. 2. a. pulled . Seconded by Clerk Coutcher. Voted 7 – 0 in favor.**

**The following items were approved:**

**A. Approval of Minutes - Regular Minutes of May 12, 2009**

**B. Personnel Items**

**1. Appointments**

**2. Leaves of Absence**

**a. Item Pulled**

**3. Resignations – (As Recommended by the Superintendent, with Regret)**

**a. Letter of Resignation from Denise Boulé, for the purpose of Retirement, from her position as Sr. High School Principal, effective on June 30, 2009**

**b. Letter of Resignation from Lenore Dorson, for the purpose of Retirement, from her position as 1.0 FTE Art Teacher at Metcalf School, effective June 26, 2009**

- c. Letter of Resignation from Maureen Pontarelli, for the purpose of Retirement, from her position as 1.0 FTE Grade 6 Teacher at

**EXETER-WEST GREENWICH May 26, 2009**

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT Page 3**

**Metcalf School, effective June 26, 2009**

**4. Grievances**

**5. Non-Renewals – Council 94**

a. Please see attached list

**6. Non-Renewals**

**7. Recalls**

**8. Sabbaticals**

**C. Bills – In the amount of \$235,078.05**

**D. Home School Approvals**

**End Consent Agenda**

**Members did not express any questions or concerns regarding Correspondence.**

**Correspondence – (1) May 26, 2009 EWGRSDSC Meeting Agenda Item Request-Information Regarding Reports from Teachers Personally Requesting to Attend a Conference**

**Vice Chair Cicero made a motion to move up agenda item, VII. A. Student Assistant Report & Contract Renewal – Jody Waranis. Seconded by Clerk Coutcher. Voted 7 – 0 in favor.**

**NEW BUSINESS – Student Assistant Report & Contract Renewal – Jody Waranis – Superintendent Geismar invited Student Assistant Counselor Jody Waranis to share what her role is at the Jr. – Sr. High School. Ms. Waranis gave an overview of the programs in place to service students grades 7 – 12. She distributed handouts showing Student Reports of Alcohol, Drug, and Cigarette Use in High School that indicate that EWG is lower than other neighboring school districts. Ms. Waranis said that the Student Assistant Program has been with EWG for 20 years and EWG was one of the first school districts to sign on.**

**Member Bollengier made a motion to approve the Student Assistant Contract Renewal. Seconded by Vice Chair Cicero. Vote 7 – 0 in favor.**

**Budget Discussion/Charter Discussion/Workshop – Superintendent Geismar referenced the 2009/10 Budget Worksheet enclosed in members' packets and said that he made a few modifications since last time. However, the bottom line is the same. The negotiation process is ongoing and the state plan for next year is impending. In**

response to Dr. Geismar's suggestion to bring some recalls to the next school committee meeting in order to hold the job fair before school lets out, Chair DeSack expressed that she will not be comfortable deciding on recalls until the negotiation outcome is known. In response to Chair DeSack's inquiry, Superintendent Geismar said that he has told junior high school Principal Mark Thompson to figure next year's schedule for three teams. He said that more information will be given during tonight's Executive Session. Dr. Geismar

**EXETER-WEST GREENWICH      May 26, 2009**

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT      Page 4**

answered various questions and gave examples of potential program/scheduling changes for next year. In response to Member Bollengier's comments regarding the sports program, Superintendent Geismar said that the School Committee has made it clear that the district will have sports next year. The "TBD" indicated under Jr. – Sr. High Sports on the 2009/10 Budget Worksheet is there rather than cutting because the district is involved in negotiations and does not know what the final outcome will be. He said that he recently met with two sports booster representatives to plan strategies of where to get funding and what it will take. Vice Chair Cicero expressed her opinion that if teams will need to fundraise next year, they need to be told. She said that many people do not know that sports will be cut. Member Bollengier said that in the past teams have not engaged in fundraising because Athletic Director McGrane is concerned that one

student does not outshine another. Vice Chair Cicero recommended to give coaches and teams the message that fundraising needs to take place. Chair DeSack recommended that any donations received should go to programs and not to one individual sport. She suggested that the athletic director could put together a program on the district website regarding fundraising. She requested that by the next meeting Dr. Geismar meet with boosters and then bring to the Committee perimeters for fundraising and a plan for consideration. Member Zuercher voiced her opinion that the plan needs to be fair to all students. Vice Chair Cicero said that some parents don't know the Committee has cut sports. In response to Chair DeSack's comment that the Committee never told taxpayers there will be no sports next year, Vice Chair Cicero said the reality is sports is not in the budget. Sports needs to be brought back in by fundraising. And a significant amount of parents do not know that. Clerk Coutcher expressed his concern regarding bringing recalls to the next meeting because if the concession process breaks down the district will be obligated to those recalled. Dr. Geismar said that he cannot bring recalls forward until he feels comfortable doing so. He has told Union President Pontarelli that he may not have the job fair until August. Although, that is not what he wants to do. Vice Chair Cicero said she has concerns regarding clubs. She expressed her opinion that they are equally as important as sports. She said she needs to see a list of the clubs to be cut. She said it is not fair to cut clubs and reinstate sports. Chair DeSack said not all clubs are going to be cut. Chair DeSack said that she presumes that the Committee will go ahead with



the Superintendent's proposed cuts.

World of Work Department of Labor Grant – Superintendent Geismar reported that he received a letter that the RI Department of Labor and Training and Rhode Island Department of Education, (RIDE) are looking for three school districts to give grant money to. Exeter-West Greenwich is one of the three to receive the World of Work Department of Labor Grant. The grant funding will cover the cost of a teacher, a job coach for 100 students in grades 11 and 12, and materials for the class. The curriculum is approved by RIDE. Students will receive classroom instruction and then be placed in paying jobs. It is a one year grant and there is no requirement to sustain the program after the one year. Principal Boulé has recommended placing co-op students into the program. Chair DeSack advised that because the program is funded through a grant, School Committee does not need to vote on this matter. Member Bollengier commented that he supports the program but hopes it does not create unreasonable expectations in

EXETER-WEST GREENWICH May 26, 2009

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT Page 5

light of the economic climate. Dr. Geismar said that was a concern of his as well, however, the Department of Labor and Training wants to place 80 out of 100 students into jobs and are adamant that they will. He said that he thinks it is worth moving forward with and added that it is cost free to the district.

**High School Principal Selection Committee Appointments – Vice Chair Cicero and Members Walsh and Bollengier volunteered to serve on the Principal Selection Committee representing the School Committee. Chair DeSack gave direction to post an advertisement on the district website and at town businesses seeking parent volunteers to serve on the selection committee. The names of parents that show interest shall be brought to the next regular meeting and the School Committee shall form the search committee at that time. Chair DeSack recommended that members may want to consider employing a search firm outside of the state of Rhode Island to facilitate the selection process.**

**Request Purchase Approval – School Spring Recruiting Service – Director of Administration Robert Ross put forth his recommendation to purchase recruiting services from SchoolSpring, Inc. He outlined the services the company provides and answered members' clarifying questions. In response to Member Bollengier question, Mr. Ross confirmed that this service will require no additional funding and is technically already budgeted for under an approved line item for next year. Superintendent Geismar added that other superintendents have told him it is a tremendous service at a relatively small price. Chair DeSack advised that this item does not require a School Committee vote.**

**Ex Mark Lawn Mower for Sports Fields – Director of Administration**

Robert Ross referenced items enclosed in members' packets outlining a request for approval to purchase an eXmark Zero Turn Mower. [XMARK Laser XF, Commercial Grade, 72 inch deck (66 inch cut) 35 hp Vanguard, Service: Allen Seed, Full Manufacturer's Warrantee, List Price: \$13,800; EWG Price: \$5,500] In response to Member Bollengier's questions, Mr. Ross said that the mower shall be used exclusively on playing field turf, will be property of the district, and will be housed in the pump house. Clerk Coutcher advised that the track committee is building a storage shed to house the mower. Mr. Ross confirmed that there is sufficient space to store the mower in the existing shed at this time.

Member Walsh moved to allow the district to purchase this mower. Seconded by Member Bollengier. Voted 7 – 0 in favor.

**Bid Recommendation – Transportation – Director of Administration**  
Robert Ross reported that there were four companies that responded to the in-district transportation bid. Three of the four companies submitted bids. Salter Transportation, Inc. of Newbury, Massachusetts is the low bidder. Mr. Ross answered members' questions and gave details regarding Salter Transportation and its fleet. In response to Member Bollengier's

**EXETER-WEST GREENWICH    May 26, 2009**

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT    Page 6**

inquiry, Mr. Ross expressed a range of concerns and explained his

**reasoning when he made his decision to recommend the bid award to Salter instead of remaining with First Student.**

**Member Walsh made a motion to accept Bob's recommendation [to award Salter Transportation the EWGRSD in-district student transportation contract]. Seconded by Member Zuercher. Voted 6 – 1 in favor. Member Bollengier voted no.**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS – Hockey Proposal – Update – Chair DeSack advised that the district is waiting for more information concerning the hockey proposal.**

**Formulate Charter Change Committee – Vice Chair Cicero drew two names from a pool of three community members to serve on the Charter Change Committee representing West Greenwich. Next, Vice Chair Cicero drew two names from a pool of three community members to serve on the Charter Change Committee representing Exeter. The names drawn are listed below:**

- 1. Paul Kaltschnee - WG**
- 2. Bob Bollengier - WG**
- 3. Jason Whitford - Exeter**
- 4. Sharon Walsh - Exeter**

**Chair DeSack advised that it is up to the School Committee members on the Charter Change Committee to move forward with this**

**committee.**

**Kindergarten Enrollment – Superintendent Geismar said there is no significant change in the status of kindergarten enrollment to report at this time. This item shall continue to the next regular meeting agenda.**

**Chair DeSack reverted back to previous agenda item, Formulate Charter Change Committee. She said that there were six community members who asked to be part of the Charter Change Committee. The School Committee determined the size of that committee. There is no reason why the School Committee cannot make a recommendation to allow all six community members to serve on the Charter Change Committee.**

**Vice Chair Cicero made a motion to change the Charter Change Committee make up of the community members to be three from Exeter and three from West Greenwich. Seconded by Member Zuercher. Voted 7 – 0 in favor.**

**The following community members will also serve on the Charter Change Committee:**

**5. Bob Hicks – Exeter**

**6. Lee Kissinger – West Greenwich**

**EXETER-WEST GREENWICH     May 26, 2009**

**Capital Project Update – No comment(s).**

**Out of District Transportation – Update – Superintendent Geismar said that he and Mr. Ross attended a meeting this morning regarding out-of-district transportation. At this point in time, the final cost savings is unknown but there will be some. Meetings will be set up for parents of special education students.**

**Reports/Comments – Chair DeSack reverted back to consent agenda item VI. B. 2. a. which was pulled by Member Bollinger. Member Bollengier asked if this request is consistent and allowed for under the Collective Bargaining Agreement, (CBA). Superintendent Geismar said that the CBA indicates the district shall grant a leave without pay for at least one year. He said that he believes it is consistent and he does not believe it is discretionary.**

**Member Bollengier moved to accept the request for LOA. Seconded by Member Zuercher. Voted 7 – 0 in favor.**

**The following consent agenda item was approved:**

**VI. Routine Items**

**Consent Agenda**

**B. Personnel Items**

**2. Leaves of Absence – (ENCLOSED) – (As Recommended by the Superintendent)**

**a. Request from Elena Taylor Garcia for a Leave of Absence without pay, from her position as .8 FTE ESL Teacher, effective for the school year 2009 – 2010**

**Important Dates and Meetings Important Dates and Meetings  
–Wednesday, May 27, 2009-Building Committee Meeting;  
Wednesday, June 3, 2009-Honors Night; Wednesday, June 10, 2009-School Committee Meeting-(Special Education Presentation);  
Friday, June 12, 2009-Graduation; Friday, June 19, 2009-Last Day of School; Tuesday, June 23, 2009-School Committee Meeting-(Facilities Presentation)**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION – RIGL 42-46-4 and RIGL 42-46-5 – Vice Chair Cicero moved to go into Executive Session at 9:45 p.m. in accordance with 42-46-5 (a)(9) – CBA – Grievance(s), and 42-46-5 (2) – CBA – Negotiation Discussion, and 42-46-5 (2) CBA - Pending Litigation and 42-46-5 (a)(1) - Personnel. Seconded Member Bollengier.  
Voted 7 – 0 in favor.**

**Meeting recessed to Executive Session at 9:45 p.m.**

**EXETER-WEST GREENWICH May 26, 2009**

**Motion to adjourn to Open Session made by Member Bollengier, seconded by Member Walsh. Voted 7 – 0 in favor.**

**Meeting returned to Open Session at 9:59 p.m.**

**No votes were taken during Executive Session.**

**Motion to adjourn made by Member Walsh, seconded by Vice Chair Cicero**

**Voted 7 – 0 in favor.**

**ROBIN CERIO**

**CLERK**